

Ticket giveaway for Maltings' show

Farnham Maltings (*Brilliance, It's A Wonderful Life*) will present *Title and Deed*, American playwright Will Eno's haunting, funny and quietly moving examination of what it is to search for 'home', next Thursday (February 28) – and has ten tickets to give away to ten lucky *Herald* readers.

Promising a beautiful and poetic evening of storytelling from the team that brought you *Brilliance* and *The Ironman Feast*, *Title and Deed* has been described as "gorgeously and inventively wrought" by the *New York Times*, and "one of the best monologues I've ever seen" by *The Guardian*.

A foreign man gathers us together to sort through his surprising experience of the search for that singular place in the world where we can

feel complete and shares his story, comparing the odd traditions in his country of birth with the realities of life here.

"It's hard to imagine more dazzling writing," said *The Telegraph* of playwright Will Eno, while *The New York Times* added "his words cut to the heart of how we muddle through the worst life can bring".

Title and Deed by Farnham Maltings will be performed on Thursday, February 28 at 7.30pm. Ticket cost £12 (£10 concessions, £9 members) from farnhammaltings.com or the box office on 01252 745444.

For a chance to win one of ten tickets up for grabs, call the Maltings' box office on 01252 745444 and quote 'Herald'. The first ten lucky readers will get a free ticket.

New crime series set in Farnham

Once a resident of the Farnham suburbs, author VJ Barrington has chosen the area as the backdrop for his new crime mystery adventures.

The *Bailey Jacobs Mysteries* is a 12-part series, with the first four episodes released in paperback earlier this week.

"It's *Veronica Mars* with a pinch of *Jessica Jones* and a dollop of *Agatha Raisin*," said the author VJ Barrington, who now lives on the Antrim Coast, Northern Ireland, but still has fond memories and many friends in the Farnham area.

"While I've changed some of the names and taken minor liberties with local geography and landmarks, I'm sure residents will recognise the locations quite easily," he said.

Bailey Jacobs is a 17-year-old amateur sleuth whose no-nonsense, bullheaded approach often lands her in more trouble than the trouble she's investigating.

Set in Farnham, these semi-cosy mysteries deliver a lively blend of crime and humour that entertain to the very last twist.

"I don't know where Bailey came from. I wanted someone who could blunder in and out



VJ Barrington

of trouble with ease," added the author.

"I wanted someone who could make you laugh and cry on the same page.

"And I wanted someone who could make you feel safe in a knowledge that no matter how many times they took the wrong turn, they would eventually get home safely."

Barrington is already busy writing the fifth instalment – *Bailey Jacobs and Tomorrow's News* – which is due for release in the autumn.

For the latest information from VJ Barrington, visit www.vjbarrington.com.

Rising Stars 2019: Gallery to celebrate new makers

Some of the UK's most exciting new makers in crafts, design and applied arts will show off their wares at Farnham's New Ashgate Gallery from March 2 to April 13, as part of the *Rising Stars 2019* exhibition.

Rising Stars is a platform for some of the most exciting new crafts by emerging makers in crafts, design and applied arts. This year the exhibition will be showcased at the New Ashgate Gallery and also include a programme of makers' professional development events and a £500 prize. The participants are graduating students, recent graduates or have a pivotal moment in their early career because of changed circumstances.

This year, the project received 109 applications. Thirty makers have been selected for the exhibition by a panel of craft professionals, focusing on their potential and talent.

Panelists included Rebecca Skeels, course leader for postgraduate programmes at the School of Craft and Design, University for the Creative Arts, Gemma Curtis, crafts programme coordinator at the Farnham Maltings and Dr Outi Remes, director of the New Ashgate Gallery.

Dr Remes said: "Many of the graduating makers are at a crossroads:



Emily Jane Bruce (*Rising Stars 2018* winner), Big Top



Mitch Pilkington, *Pink Vessel* (photo: Mitch Pilkington)

they have a full portfolio of fabulous ideas, but are yet to establish their business skills and a network of collectors. Rising Stars offers just the right platform, and for many, it is a starting point for an exceptional career.

"Rising Stars is an opportunity for the makers as well as art collectors who wish to support and collect work by future stars."

The selected makers of exceptional talent are: Angelina Jane, Ara Textiles, Louise Bell, Georgia Buck, Holly Burton, Eve Campbell, Jenny Chan, Sara Chyan, Kim Colebrook, Michaela Coman, Natalie Eagle, Tamir Erlich, Alice Funge, Alysa Freeman, Susanna Gogarty, Iona Hall, Qiang Li, Marek Liska, Sam Lucas, Ruth Marindale, Bekky May, Annette Mills, Poppy Norton, Benjamin Pearey, Mitch Pilkington, Nastassia Ramazankhani, Kyle Ramsey, Catherine Rua, Jimya Zhao and Marissa Zaesing.

Rising Stars is organised by the New Ashgate Gallery and supported by the Billmeir Charitable Trust, in partnership with the University for the Creative Arts, Farnham. For more information see www.newashgate.org.uk

Oscar winner fails to make waves

REVIEW: *Rough Crossing*
Chichester Festival Theatre and arriving at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford (March 11 to 16)

What, thought-provoking, entertaining, Tom Stoppard's writing for theatre has won him boatloads of awards over a long and illustrious career. The author of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *Jumpers*, *Travesties* and *Arcadia*, Stoppard won an academy award for his co-written screenplay of *Shakespeare in Love*. But Bill Kenwright's touring production of *Rough Crossing* causes a queasy effect on the audience as the scales fall from our eyes and we wonder if our former feelings for Stoppard were just infatuation.



Rob Ostlere (Adam), Isy Van Randwyck (Natasha), John Partridge (Tural), Matthew Gottle (Gal)

A beautiful stage design by Colin Richmond promises much for this shipboard farce set on an elegant transatlantic liner. Think 1930s, film stars, Noel Coward, and dressing for dinner a perfect mix, one would imagine, for a sharp, refreshing cocktail of a show. Add the icy tinkle of music by Stoppard's friend, the conductor and composer Andre Previn, and the effect should be intoxicating.

Sadly, this is not the case.

Trapped on deck in the tedious company of two writers suffering from writers' block, we feel the first indication that this will not be a smooth or sunny cruise. In a show like this, the audience are not expecting a great deal more than entertainment and

delivering, or should that be, limping, gab about not ruining a drink. The tension is built, but not in a good way. We find ourselves sympathising too much with Tural, the blocked writer played by John Partridge, of *EastEnders* fame (he played Christian Clarke). Like him, we are gasping for a drink, and if possible, an escape to the theatre bar.

The plot is as thin and unsatisfying as seawater. Love-crossed actors rehearsing an unfinished play, sail tirelessly towards a tediously predictable destination. Actor Isy Van Randwyck, as Natasha, injects some life into the proceedings in her early appearances on stage as she breaks up the whining emptiness of the male leads' conversation. Even this is unsustainable. In one scene, Natasha and her 'play within the play' co-star Ivor (Simon Dutton) rehearse while the other characters sit bored and distracted. Even the most well-disposed audience must wonder why they should care when the characters do not.

It is heady to witness hard-working actors flailing in their efforts to find a steady path through a hopeless script. This cast tried their best but they were helpless, at the mercy of Captain Tom Stoppard.

In the audience, all was flat calm. Barely a ripple of laughter broke the surface as this famously-talented playwright, failed to make waves.

Rough Crossing comes to the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, March 11 to 16.

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